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Senate approves Hardiman's effort to block burdensome and expensive union preference rules for adult foster homes

LANSING — The Senate today approved Sen. Bill Hardiman's effort to block costly new rules on adult care facilities, ensuring Michigan families have a broad range of care options at a reasonable price.

Under regulations being considered by the Granholm administration, a group-home facility would have to maintain extensive paperwork on employees, hiring and compensation, or it could simply sign a collective bargaining agreement and be deemed in compliance. Hardiman introduced the legislation because vulnerable people shouldn't have less protection or state oversight simply because the employees at their facility are unionized.

"Michigan families deserve safe, affordable care for their loved ones, and what the administration is considering doesn't achieve that," said Hardiman, R-Kentwood. "This is a clear attempt to favor adult care homes with collective bargaining agreements while forcing others to unionize. It's bad policy and over-regulation, and we should stop it."

Industry analysts have estimated the additional cost to care providers to be at least \$35 million a year, which would be borne by Michigan families who depend on these facilities to care for their loved ones.

"Over-regulating an industry is bad enough, but excusing a business from following rules because it is or is not unionized just adds insult to injury," said Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema, R-Wyoming. "Additional burdensome and unnecessary regulations are the last thing Michigan's small businesses need."

Almost 50,000 adults live in a state-licensed assisted-living facility in Michigan. Residents require special care because of developmental, psychiatric or physical disabilities.

Senate Bills 1026-1030 now head to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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